

ACUTE CRAW-CRAW

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The term 'Craw-Craw' is applied extensively in West Africa to describe pathological conditions of the skin, which are mainly characterised by the presence of a papulo-vesicular eruption, accompanied by more or less itching.

Generally, this rash is most marked about the buttocks, perineum, genitals, and groins; and is most commonly seen in a condition which seems to indicate chronicity, viz., scale formation, and hypertrophy.

But in certain cases I have seen the rash become almost universal with great rapidity, the outbreak being associated with fever and malaise, and under these conditions mistaken for variola and varicella.

Both at Accra, on the Gold Coast, and at Freetown, Sierra Leone, the affection in this form is not very uncommon.

The rash may be practically universal and is vesicular in the very early stage. The vesicles have very little, if any, papular foundation, and always lack the well-defined base of a typical variola spot, and, moreover, the spot is vesicular at the earliest period. Pricking the vesicle in the early stage allows exit of a sticky, pellucid fluid, and the vesicle can be entirely emptied by slight pressure without further rupture of its walls, leaving the latter collapsed. In the early stage of the case the great majority of the spots show an almost equal degree of development, but careful search will usually reveal some dried up, scaly spots. The centre of each of these old spots is generally of a lighter colour, and round the centre iris-like rings of epidermic scales, attached by their outer borders are seen. These represent a late stage of the